

2013

The Effect of Creative Drama Method on Pre-service Classroom Teachers' Writing Skills and Attitudes towards Writing

Tolga Erdogan

University of Karadeniz Technical, tolgaerdogan.edu@gmail.com

Recommended Citation

Erdogan, Tolga (2013) "The Effect of Creative Drama Method on Pre-service Classroom Teachers' Writing Skills and Attitudes towards Writing," *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*: Vol. 38: Iss. 1, Article 4.
Available at: <http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol38/iss1/4>

This Journal Article is posted at Research Online.
<http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol38/iss1/4>

The Effect of Creative Drama Method on Pre-service Classroom Teachers' Writing Skills and Attitudes towards Writing

Tolga Erdogan
University of Karadeniz Technical
Turkey

Abstract: The aim of the study is to explore the effect of the creative drama method on pre-service classroom teachers' writing skills and attitudes towards writing. Additionally, the views of the pre-service teachers concerning the creative drama method were also investigated in the study. The participants of the study were 24 pre-service teachers studying at Karadeniz Technical University Fatih Faculty of Education. The participants were asked to write activities with using creative drama method. The design of the study is mixed in that it included both qualitative and quantitative methods of research. The writings of the participants at the beginning and end of the study were evaluated through "Writing Skill Evaluation Form". Their attitude towards writing was analyzed through "Writing Attitude Scale" again at the beginning and end of the study. Interviews were conducted with the participants to reveal their views on the creative drama method. The findings of the study suggest that the creative drama method improved the participants' writing skills and attitudes towards writing. It is also found that the participants have positive views on the creative drama method.

Introduction

Writing is one of the significant skills in people's expressing their views and their effective communication. Writing is an activity including cognitive, affective, social, and psychomotor processes. In the writing process, writer needs to realize various cognitive processes coordinately in order to express his/her feelings and ideas effectively and to convey meaningful messages to the readers (Flowers and Hayes, 1981). Along with this, individual's attitude, interest and desire play an important role in the writing process. Attitude towards writing is an affective feature that related with how individual feels himself/herself while writing. Students those who developed a positive attitude towards writing, desire to write, enjoy writing and are more likely to become successful. Negative attitudes developed towards writing caused students moving away from writing and unsuccessfulness (Graham, Berninger and Abbott, 2012). Students' attitudes towards writing are an important factor in shaping their success or unsuccessfulness in the writing process (Graham, 2006; Graham, Berninger and Fan, 2007; Hess and Wheldall, 1999).

Learning to write is a long formal process. Writing is the most difficult language skill (Maltepe, 2011; Olinghouse and Santangelo, 2010). For the writers, those who have not got necessary skills for writing, writing is hard and required much effort. In order to make this process easier, systematic teaching is required (Flower and Hayes, 1981).

Writing is not considered as an attractive activity. Among the reasons of this, there is necessity of abiding strict rules while writing (Oral, 2003). Furthermore, that writing required many processes in terms of cognitive, social and psychomotor point of view, students find

writing process difficult and boring. Most students have negative opinions about writing because of the experiences that the students lived before, and writing is a skill which can be acquired hard and late. At the basis of negative feeling, opinion and attitudes of the students towards writing, also there lies that students not being motivated enough to writing. Students need to be motivated in order to begin, continue and complete the writing. With right method and techniques, these motivational supports can be supplied and students can be helped for developing positive attitudes towards writing (Bruning and Horn, 2000).

Various methods and techniques should be employed to make the students develop positive attitudes towards writing. Such methods and techniques are student-centered, creative and enjoying (Kirmizi, 2008). Creative drama is one of these methods. The creative drama method can be employed to improve the students' writing skills and their attitudes towards writing (Aykac, 2011).

Creative drama refers to as the expansion of experience and learning (Heathcote, 1984). San (2002) argues that creative drama is a method in which individuals reorganize their cognitive patterns regarding an experience, an event, an idea, an abstract concept or behaviour in a group setting through theater or drama techniques such as role-playing or improvisation. Courtney (1989) defines creative drama as a process in which imaginative ideas are transformed into actions.

Creative drama involves fictional journey. Participants of the process are allowed to inquire the experiences through fiction (Ataman, 2011). The most significant characteristics of creative drama are being based on individuals' own experience and the provision of a living educational environment (San, 1995).

Creative drama provides the individuals significant opportunity to remember their life experiences (Macy, 2004). Creative drama used in classrooms is a useful tool to improve creativity, imagination and curiosity. It teaches reasoning, self-perception and visualization. It further helps the teaching of these skills through experiential techniques (Annarella, 2000).

Creative drama has the characteristics for realizing holistic learning. It involves the cognitive, affective and physical dimensions of learning processes. Participants experienced various drama processes in which they are in the center of the learning process. They assume several roles in this process and become more familiar with themselves, perceive themselves better and develop various predictions (Adiguzel, 2010, Ustundag, 2010).

The method of creative drama includes three major steps. The most basic distinction among these steps from traditional practices is that they involve implicit or explicit participation of the leader and others in the process (Ustundag, 2010). These three steps are as following (Adiguzel, 2002; 2006):

1. *Preparation-warming up activities*: It is the step in which the body is activated, senses are used intensively and self-oriented activities are done. Various activities are conducted to build a group dynamics. The basic aim of this step is to prepare the participants for the next step.

2. *Animation*: This step is composed of the activities in which a topic is shaped, revealed and developed.

3. *Evaluation-discussion*: At the third step, the outcomes of the creative drama activities are evaluated and discussed to uncover their essence, significance and qualities.

Research suggests that creative drama improves the students' writing skills and their attitudes towards writing (Ataman, 2006; Aykac, 2011; Karateke, 2006; Kaya, 2008; Kirmizi, 2008; Stowe, 2001). Many educators claim that creative drama has a latent power for developing and sustaining of students' writings (Ataman, 2011).

The process of writing is also composed of several steps, including pre-writing, drafting, reviewing, organizing and publishing (Dorn and Soffos, 2001; Sundem, 2007). Creative drama helps implementing these steps of writing process (Annarella, 2000). Since preparation-warm up, animation and evaluation activities carried out in the creative drama process includes and supports these steps, creative drama improves the students' writing

skills. Students perform many activities of the writing process during the process of creative drama. Creative drama techniques suggest linking ways for supporting writing process. Arts, music and kinesthetic processes that used in creative drama activities provide students rich experiences in the pre-writing activities. The more efficient these processes are, the more qualified the writings will be (Ataman, 2011).

The writing skill is developed together with other language skills that are listening, speaking and reading. All these skills are interrelated, any of them can be developed itself. During the writing activities included in the process of creative drama, four language skills improve simultaneously. Creative drama is a creative and integrated instrument for the interaction of these language skills (Annarella, 2000).

In the development of students' writing skills and students' developing positive attitudes towards writing teachers have the primary role. Teachers may help the students to improve their writing skills and attitudes towards writing through the appropriate learning and teaching processes. However, teachers should have developed good writing skills and positive writing attitudes in order to provide such processes. That is because their own writing skills, their perspectives regarding the process of writing and their writing attitudes significantly affect the writing activities (Bruning and Horn, 2000). According to Oral (2003) it is important and necessary for teachers who want to provide writing activities should try writing before realizing these activities. That teacher's doing such activities not only improves his/her writing skills but also it provides establishing empathy with their students.

In this respect, in order that pre-service teachers develop students' writing skills at a satisfactory level and gain students' positive attitudes towards writing, pre-service teacher should develop these features before starting to the teaching career. Because the skills and attitudes of the pre-service teachers affect the teaching environment they will build in their future teaching profession (Bagci, 2007). In this respect, this research gains importance since it puts forth the effect of creative drama method on pre-service classroom teachers' writing skills and attitudes towards writing and reveals the opinions of pre-service classroom teachers about creative drama method.

Research Questions

The aim of the study is to explore the effects of the creative drama method on pre-service classroom teachers' writing skills and their attitude towards writing. Additionally, the opinions of the pre-service teachers concerning creative drama method were also investigated in the study. The study tries to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of creative drama method on pre-service classroom teachers' writing skills?
2. What is the effect of creative drama method on pre-service classroom teachers' attitudes towards writing?
3. What do classroom pre-service teachers think about the method of creative drama?

Method

Design of the Study

The study employed a mixed method in regard to collection, analysis and discussion of the data of the study. In mixed method, qualitative and quantitative methods are used simultaneously to analyze the research problems in detail (Cresswell, 2008; Fraenkel and Wallen, 2006). The most important feature of this method is that beside it allows the results of the study to be shown in quantitative data; it also provides opportunity of explaining why these results are obtained with qualitative data (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006). The mixed method has three designs of triangulation, explanatory and exploratory. In the current study, that of explanatory is employed. The explanatory design involves two steps. At the first step, quantitative data are gathered. Then, the qualitative data are analyzed to further analyze and explain the quantitative data. This design allows for explaining the quantitative data through the findings obtained by the qualitative data (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2007; McMillan and Schumacher, 2006).

Concerning the quantitative aspect of the study, single group, pre- and post-test design was used. More specifically, the writing skills and the writing attitudes of the participants were analyzed through related measurement tools at the beginning and at end of the study.

Concerning the qualitative aspect, the participants were interviewed at the end of the study. The participants to be interviewed were selected through “criterion sampling method” (Yildirim and Simsek, 2006). Therefore, four students were selected from the categories of high, medium and lower scores on the two data collection tools, namely “Writing Skill Evaluation Form” and “Writing Attitude Scale”. Thus, twelve participants were interviewed.

Participants

The participants of the study include 24 pre-service classroom teachers studying at Karadeniz Technical University Fatih Faculty of Education. The participants were junior undergraduate students. They were chosen from 53 undergraduate students taking the course of “Turkish Instruction”. The participants were informed about the aims and procedures of the study. Of the participants, 21 were females and 3 were males. The age range of the participants is 21-22.

Data Collection Tools

The writings of the participants at the beginning and end of the study were evaluated through “Writing Skill Evaluation Form” (Appendix 1). This form was developed by the researcher. Firstly, the related literature was reviewed to develop the form. The dimensions included in the form were reviewed by five field specialists. Based on the reviews of the specialists, necessary changes were made, and the form was used in pre-study with a sample of 184 pre-service classroom teachers. The form is composed of three dimensions, the organization of writing, content, and language and expression. The first dimension includes six items. The second dimension is consisted of seven items, and the last dimension involves eight items. These items are scored through five options: “(1) weak”, “(2) acceptable”, “(3) moderate”, “(4) good” and “(5) very good”. The Cronbach Alfa coefficients of the dimensions are found to be as follows: .92 for writing dimension, .89 for content dimension and .94 for language and expression.

“Writing Attitude Scale” was used as pre- and post-test to reveal the participants’ attitudes towards writing (Appendix 2). The scale was also developed by the researcher. The related literature on the writing attitude was reviewed to develop the scale. Later, 83 pre-service classroom teachers are asked to write about their views on the writing skills. Then, the

attitude items of the scale were developed based on the review of literature and pre-service teachers' writings. Next, the scale was reviewed by five field specialists. Based on the reviews of the specialists, the items of the scale were revised. At the end, the scale was developed including 32 items with 17 positive statements and 15 negative statements. The scale was tested in a pre-study with a sample of 150 pre-service classroom teachers. Factor analysis was performed to test the construct validity of the scale. Primary Constituent Analysis (PCA) and then Varimax Vertical Rotation were employed to identify the items not measuring the same attitude (Buyukozturk, 2007). Eight items were removed from the scale, leading to the total number of 18 in the scale based on the findings of the analyses. The findings of the factor analysis also showed that the scale has one factor and explains 60,74 % of the total variance. Therefore, it can be argued that the scale is a reliable tool given that the rate of variance it explains and the single factor it has (Buyukozturk, 2007). The writing scale has a total of 18 attitude items, ten of which are positive, while eight are negative. The items are likert-type statements that are scored with the options of "completely agree, agree, undecided, disagree and completely disagree". Minimum score on the scale is 18, whereas maximum score is 90. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is found as .92.

Semi-structured interviews were performed with the participants to identify their views about the process of teaching (Yildirim and Simsek, 2006). An interview form was developed to use in the interviews. After developing the items, the form was reviewed by three field specialists. The form was tested in pre-study with two student teachers. Based on the findings of the pre-study, the form was finalized.

Procedure

The participants were asked to write activities with creative drama method. The activities were prepared and applied by the researcher who is also a creative drama leader. The application lasted for seven weeks, three hours per week. Therefore, a total of 21 hours was allocated for the application. The participants were asked to write six different genres, including story, poem, fairy tale, story (description), memory and letter. Furthermore, in the last application, a general evaluation study was conducted about the process. The writings of the participants were produced following the steps of the creative drama method outlined by Adiguzel (2002; 2006). It consisted of three steps: preparation-warming up, animation and evaluation. In the preparation-warming up step, activities which provide participants to be prepared mentally and physically for the process were used. In the animation step, pre-service teachers were provided to make animation towards defined gainings by using different drama techniques especially improvisation and role-play. At the end of the study evaluation studies were conducted in order to define gainings were reached in what extent. Different evaluation methods and techniques were used at this step. An example of the activities is given in Appendix 3.

Data Collection and Analysis

The participants were asked to write down several genres using the topics given at the beginning of the study. They were also asked to state their preferred genres and topic. All the genres and topics defined were written on the board. Pre-service teachers were asked to write by choosing one of the defined topics and genres from the board. At the end of the application, pre-service teachers were asked again to write in the same genres that they chose before. These writings were analyzed using the evaluation form. The writings were rated by three researchers with using this form. For the inter-reliability of rater, the Kendall consistency coefficient was used. The coefficient was found to be $W=.95$. Therefore, inter-

reliability of the rater is high. The scores of the participants were determined through the means of the ratings given by three raters. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to identify whether there was a statistically meaningful difference between the pre- and post-test scores of the participants or not.

“Writing Attitude Scale” was used as pre- and post-test to reveal the participants’ attitudes towards writing. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to identify whether there was a statistically meaningful difference between the pre- and post-test attitudes scores of the participants or not.

In order to reveal the participants’ views about the application, the semi-structured interviews were conducted at the end of the study. The interviews were made by the researcher and recorded through voice recording device. The findings obtained from the interviews were analyzed through “descriptive analysis” (Yildirim and Simsek, 2006). Firstly, the recorded interviews were transcribed and placed on a matrix. Then, the repeated expressions were analyzed to find their frequency. The statements of the participants are also used to support the findings. Each participant is given a number with the capital letter (P, number) used with the statement.

Findings

Findings and Discussion Regarding the First Research Question

The first research question is about the writing skills of the participants. The writing skills were analyzed through the “Writing Skill Evaluation Form”. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to identify whether there was a statistically meaningful difference between the pre- and post-test scores of the participants or not. The scores of the participants on the evaluation form are given in Table 1.

Writing Format (Post- and pre-test)	n	Mean rank	Total rank	z	p
Negative rank	2	4.25	8.50	3.14*	.002
Positive rank	14	9.11	127.50		
Equal	8	-	-		
Content (Post- and pre-test)					
Negative rank	2	3,00	6,00	3.70*	.000
Positive rank	18	11,33	204,00		
Equal	4	-	-		
Language and Expression (Post- and pre-test)					
Negative rank	3	2,00	6,00	3.47*	.001
Positive rank	15	11,00	165,00		
Equal	6	-	-		

*Based on negative rank

Table 1. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

As seen in Table 1, the pre- and post-test scores of the participants regarding the writing skills differ significantly at all three dimensions ($p < .05$). It is further seen that this statistically significant difference is in favor of the post-test scores. Therefore, it can be argued that the creative drama method contributed to the improvement of the participants writing skills regarding writing format, content and language and expression.

Findings and Discussion Regarding the Second Research Question

The second research question was about the participants' attitudes towards writing. Their writing attitudes were analyzed through "Writing Attitude Scale" administered a pre- and post-test. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to identify whether there was a statistically meaningful difference between the pre- and post-test attitudes scores of the participants or not. The attitude scores of the participants on the evaluation form are given in Table 2.

Attitude (Post- and pre-test)	n	Mean rank	Total rank	z	p
Negative rank	0	.00	.00	4.10*	.000
Positive rank	22	11.50	253.00		
Equal	2				

*Based on negative rank

Table 2. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

As seen in Table 2, the pre- and post-test scores of the participants regarding their writing attitudes differ significantly ($p < .05$). It is further seen that this statistically significant difference is in favor of the post-test scores. Therefore, it can be argued that the creative drama contributed to the improvement of the participants' attitudes towards writing.

Findings and Discussion Regarding the Third Research Question

The third research question is about the views of the participants concerning the creative drama method. For this aim, semi-structured interviews were carried out with twelve participants. The findings obtained are discussed below.

The effects of Creative Drama on the Participants' Writing Skills

All of the participants interviewed ($n=12$) reported that creative drama improved their writing skills. They were asked to state a reason for this improvement. The distribution of frequency about the improvement reason of pre-service teachers' writing skills is given in Table 3.

Improvement Reasons of the Writing Skill	Frequency
Creative drama includes preparatory activities for writing	12
The activities included increase the desire to write something	12
It is an learning environment in which we practice and experience	10
Topics are interesting	10
The process is enjoyable	8
It allowed us to think about the process	8
It included group work	7
It allowed us to express ourselves easily	7
It allowed us to look at the topics from different point of views	6

Table 3. Distribution of Frequency for Improvement Reason of the Pre-service Teachers' Writing Skills with Creative Drama Method

According to data given in Table 3, pre-service teachers stated that their writing skills were improved because of the various reasons such as it was given preparatory activities, it increased the desire to write, and thinking skills were developed. It is further reported that creative drama improved their writing skills. Therefore, it can be suggested that the steps of the creative drama method, namely preparation and animation, included those activities that are effective improving the writing skills. The views of P5 in this regard are as follows:

“My writing skills have improved. Since the activities in the process well prepared us for writing. They made writing very easy. The process is also very enjoyable. I desired to write something. It improved my writing skills.” (P, 5)

The Effect of Creative Drama Method on the Participants’ Attitudes towards Writing

All of the participants interviewed (n=12) reported that creative drama improved their attitudes towards writing. The distribution of frequency about the reason of pre-service teachers’ writing attitudes were effected positively is given in Table 4.

Reasons	Frequency
The process is enjoyable	12
Topics are interesting and different	11
It allowed us to express ourselves easily	11
The process leaves a room for curiosity	9
Sharing of the writings	9
The process included games	8
The process included improvisation	8
Different and authentic activities	7

Table 4. Distribution of Frequency about the Reason of Pre-service Teachers’ Writing Attitudes were Effected Positively

Table 4 shows that the participants found the method of creative drama helpful in improving their attitudes towards writing, since the process was enjoyable, the activities evoked curiosity, and the activities were different and original. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the creative drama method included those activities that are effective in improving the attitudes towards writing. The views of P1 in this regard are as follows:

“Before the study, I did not like writing. But the activities were very enjoyable. We played games and made improvisations. After these activities, I liked writing.” (P, 1)

Dominances of Creative Drama Method

All of the participants interviewed (n=12) stated some dominance of the creative drama method. These are given in Table 5.

Dominances of creative drama	Frequency
That the participants are being active	12
Increased levels of interpersonal interaction	12
Improved creative thinking	12
Improved self-confidence	11
Provision of empathy	10
Learning through doing and experiencing	10
Improved communication skills	9
Improved the skill of group work	8
Provided both learning and joy	8

Table 5. Distribution of the Dominances of Creative Drama Method

As can be seen in Table 5, the participants stated several dominances of creative drama, including that the participants are being active, increased interaction among individuals, developed creative thinking, empathy and self-confidence, learning through doing, improved communication skills and team-work skills. These findings suggest that the participants regarded the creative drama method as a good instructional practice. The views of P9 in this regard are as follows:

“Allowing active participation is the most significant part of creative drama. We became very active in the process. It also supported interpersonal interactions. It is enjoyable and teaches writing.” (P, 9)

Limitations of the Creative Drama Method

Half of the participants interviewed (n=6) reported that creative drama has no limitation, while the other half argued that it has some limitations. The frequency distribution of the expression about pre-service teachers related with the limitation of creative drama method is given in Table 6.

Limitations	Frequency
Need for a suitable setting	4
Need for smaller class-size	4
Need for best planning	3

Table 6. The Frequency Distribution of the Expression about Pre-service Teachers Related with the Limitation of Creative Drama Method

Table 6 indicates that the participants stated certain disadvantages of creative drama, including suitable setting, smaller class-size and best planning. The views of P7 in this regard are as follows:

“The implementation of creative drama requires a suitable space. And the class size should be smaller. It cannot be used in the crowded classrooms. Furthermore, a careful planning is also necessary for the implementation. The activities I experienced showed these aspects.” (P, 7)

Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

The study explored the effect of creative drama on the pre-service classroom teachers' writing skills and attitudes as well as their opinions on creative drama. The findings indicate that creative drama method improved the participants' writing skills at the dimensions of writing organization, content and language and expression.

Effective writing requires the activation of prior knowledge on writing and the preparation for the process of writing. McCutchen, Covill, Hoyne and Mildes (1994) argued that prior knowledge about the topic of writing is instrumental in the quality of writing. Activation of the prior knowledge is realized through two steps of creative drama, namely preparation-warming up and animation. Therefore, participants are effectively prepared for the process of writing. Then they can effectively express themselves through writing. For example, in an application in the research pre-service teachers made improvisations about the theme of the poem before passing to the poem-writing process. With these improvisations, foreknowledge of the pre-service teachers about theme of the poem was revealed. In another application, pre-service teachers passed to poem-writing process after they made activities on the paintings that they drew. In a different application, pre-service teachers played games about the objects that they will use while writing tale, they shaped these objects with their bodies, they made activities and animations thinking on objects. It can be said that, with such kind of activities, creative drama method developed pre-service teachers' writing skills since it awakens the foreknowledge of the participants before writing and prepares participants to writing process effectively. The statements of the participants also support this evidence.

Writing is an activity including cognitive aspect. Good writing requires deeper thinking about the topic and developing ideas about it (Cetindag, 2010; Dorn and Soffos, 2001). In the course of creative drama, participants look at a topic from different perspectives,

think about the topic and develop distinct views about it, making them express themselves easily. Therefore, their writing skills are improved. In applications in the research, pre-service teachers generated their writings by thinking profoundly and looking from different point of view to the topics. For example, in an application pre-service teachers were asked to respond a letter given in the study. Each participant responded the letter by using the activities that they made in the process and by looking from a different point of view. In another application, pre-service teachers were asked to use four different objects in a tale as a group. Groups generated different tales by thinking on objects and tales. It can be said that creative drama method developed pre-service teachers' writing abilities since it provides a way to think deeply about the topic and to provide looking from different point of view. This evidence was also supported by the interviews.

Writing is a social activity in a sense. Student may not produce some ideas when they write individually. This case prevents students to transfer their feelings and opinions into writings (Miell and McDonald, 2000). Graham (2006) suggests that students should interact during the writing process. Group activities in the process of writing allow for combining strengths of the group members and increase the quality of writing since it improved the writing skills of the students (Hernandez et. al., 2010). Furthermore, group activities make the students not feel alone in the writing process. Especially in the first process of creative drama, the participants write in groups. They exchange ideas about the writing and interact through these exchanges. In the applications conducted, pre-service teachers, with group study, wrote story by using pictures, wrote poem and memory by using animations and activities, and wrote tale by using objects. They produced different writings by consulting and interacting with each other in this process. It can be stated that group activities in the creative drama process improved the writing skills of the participants. It is also supported by the statements of them in the interviews.

Writing is an activity composed of certain steps. Annarella (2000) suggests that creative drama helps in application of the steps that are pre-writing, drafting, reviewing, organization and publication. In the steps of creative drama, preparation, animation and evaluation activities regarding the steps of the writing process are carried out. The study also included such activities. It can be argued that these activities improved the writing skills of the participants. For example, in an application pre-service teachers wrote their stories as a draft by using pictures after the pre-writing activities were done. And then feedbacks were given to the stories by the researcher and the groups organized their stories by reviewing in accordance with these feedbacks. After animation study, stories of the groups were presented together with their pictures. In this way, all processes of the writing were put into practice by the activities done.

Participants of the creative drama process experience an educational setting in which they are active and learn through doing. The activities offered are not boring and ordinary, but authentic and enjoyable. They take part in writing activities appealing to them. Bruning and Horn (2000) argue that if students write about a topic appealing to them, they become more eager to write. In the research pre-service teachers wrote on interesting topics such as writing tale using objects, writing letter to characters in the story, writing memory of a person who was mentioned in a newspaper report. The participants of the study became enthusiastic about writing, leading to good writing. Therefore, their writing skills were improved. The interviews also supported this evidence.

It can be stated that all these qualities of creative drama improved the writing skills of the participants. The similar views also expressed by the participants in the interviews. The finding on the improvement of the writing skills is consistent with that of the Stowe's study (2001). Stowe found that creative drama improved the writing skills of children.

The findings of the study suggest that creative drama also improved the writing attitudes of the pre-service classroom teachers. Bruning and Horn (2000) argue that creating a positive atmosphere towards writing in the classroom will make students more eager to write.

Games, improvisations and authentic activities enable a flexible, enjoyable and free learning setting. In such a setting, participants can express themselves freely. The topics of the writing activities are not boring, but enjoyable and interesting. The process of writing involves curiosity, excitement. Furthermore, writings produced in the process of creative drama are shared by the participants in several ways. Archibald (2010) states that sharing of writings make the students feel that their products are valued and recognized. In the applications done in the research, pre-service teachers were provided to share their writings in different genres such as story, poem, tale, memory. It is safe to argue that these qualities of creative drama improved the pre-service classroom teachers' attitudes towards writing. During the interviews, the participants reported similar factors in regard to the reasons for improvement in their attitudes towards writing. Additionally, research suggests that the creative drama method improves the interest and desire of the participants in writing (Ataman, 2006; Kirmizi, 2008; Stowe, 2001).

During the interviews, the participants reported several dominances of creative drama. Creative drama is based on individuals and their prior experiences. During the course of creative drama, such techniques as games, improvisation and role playing are employed. For example, in an application, pre-service teachers danced with using newspaper pieces, played game by using newspaper, formed the machine in which newspapers are printed by their bodies, made an interview as a journalist and wrote the memory of person who took place newspaper report as a group. The process of creative drama involves different activities addressing physical, mental and affective domains. Group work is another significant aspect of the creative drama. The activities in the creative drama process allow for interpersonal communication and interaction. The participants both learn and enjoyed. All these qualities of creative drama make the participants think that it is a good practice in learning.

The participants also reported the limitations of creative drama. For instance, a proper setting is needed to implement creative drama. Creative drama can be employed in different settings. Teachers may implement creative drama in different settings of the school. It can be explained with the limitation that pre-service teachers do not have enough information about the implementation of creative drama. The participants also reported that the need for a careful planning before the implementation of creative drama is a limitation and that the need for having small number of student is another limitation. However, creative drama is used following certain stages. Therefore, it needs to be planned. It is a fact that the number of participants should be less in order for creative drama to be valuable.

The study concludes that the method of creative drama improved the participants' writing skills and attitudes towards writing and that they have positive views about creative drama. Based on the findings of the study, the followings can be suggested for classroom teacher-training programs.

1. Pre-service classroom teachers should take part in writing activities via creative drama method.
2. There should be elective courses on creative drama and writing skills in the classroom teacher-training programs.

References

- Adiguzel, O. (2010). *Egitimde yaratıcı drama*. Ankara: Naturel Yayınları.
- Adiguzel, H. O. (2006). Yaratıcı drama kavramı, bileşenleri ve aşamaları. *Yaratıcı Drama Dergisi*, 1 (1), 17-30.
- Adiguzel, H. O. (2002). Egitimde yeni bir yöntem ve disiplin: yaratıcı drama. *Yaratıcı Drama 1985-1998 Yazılar* (2. Baskı), (Edt.: H. Omer ADIGUZEL), Ankara: Naturel Yayınları.
- Annarella, L. A. (2000). Using creative drama in the writing and reading process. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED445358.pdf>
- Archibald, M. (2010). *Perceptions of diverse first-grade learners of their writing instruction and growth as writer*. Doctoral of dissertation, Walden University.
- Ataman, M. (2011). *Yaratıcı yazma için yaratıcı drama*. Ankara: PegemA Akademi.
- Ataman, M. (2006). Yaratıcı drama sürecinde yaratıcı yazma. *Yaratıcı Drama Dergisi*, 1 (1), 75-88.
- Aykac, M. (2011). *Türkçe öğretiminde çocuk edebiyatı metinleriyle kurgulanan yaratıcı drama etkinliklerinin anlatma becerilerine etkisi*. Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi. Ankara Üniversitesi.
- Bagci, H. (2007). Türkçe öğretmeni adaylarının yazılı anlatıma ve yazılı anlatım derslerine yönelik tutumlarını değerlendirilmesi. Retrieved from <http://www.tubar.com.tr/TUBAR/pdf/2007BAHAR>, 29-61.
- Bruning, R. & Horn, C. (2000). Developing motivation to write, *Educational psychologist*, 35(1), 25-37.
- Buyukozturk, S. (2007). *Sosyal bilimler için veri analizi el kitabı*. Ankara: Pegem A Yayıncılık.
- Courtney, R. (1989). Culture and the creative drama teacher. *Youth Theatre Journal*, 3 (4), 18-23.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano-Clark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. (1th Edition). USA: Sage Publications.
- Cetindag, Z. (2010). "Yazılı anlatım", *Yazılı ve Sözlü Anlatım* (Ed.:Latif Beyreli), Ankara: PegemA Yayıncılık.
- Dorn, L. J. & Soffos, C. (2001). *Scaffolding young writers*. America: Stenhouse Publishers,
- Flowers, L. & Hayes, J. R. (1981). A cognitive process theory of writing, *College Composition and Communication*, 32 (4), 928-950.
- Fraenkel, J. R. & Wallen, N. E. (2006). *How to design and evaluate research in education*. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies.
- Graham, S. (2006). Writing. In P. Alexander & P. Winne (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (pp. 457-478). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Graham, S., Berninger, V. & Abbott, R. (2012). Are attitudes toward writing and reading separable constructs? A study with primary grade children, *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, 28(1), 51-69.
- Graham, S., Berninger, V. & Fan, W. (2007). The structural relationship between writing attitude and writing achievement in first and third grade students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 32 (3), 516-536.
- Gunes, F. (2007). *Türkçe öğretimi ve zihinsel yapılandırma*. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.
- Heathcote, D. (1984). *Collected writings*, London: Hutchinson.
- Hess, M. & Wheldall, K. (1999). Strategies for improving the written expression of primary children with poor writing skills. *Australian Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 4(4), 14-20.

- Karateke, E. (2006). *Yaratıcı dramanın ilköğretim ü. kademedeki 6.sınıf öğrencilerinin yazılı anlatım becerilerine olan etkisi*. Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Mustafa Kemal Üniversitesi.
- Kaya Güler, I. (2008). *İlköğretim dördüncü sınıf türkçe dersinde, yaratıcı dramanın etkililiği*". Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 19 Mayıs Üniversitesi.
- Kirmizi, F. S. (2008). Türkçe dersinde yaratıcı drama yöntemine dayalı yaratıcı yazma çalışmalarının yazmaya yönelik tutuma etkisi. *Yaratıcı Drama Dergisi*, 4 (7), 51-68.
- Macy, L. (2004). A novel study through drama. *International Reading Association*, 58 (3), 240-248.
- Maltepe, S. (2011). Türkçe derslerindeki yazma süreçlerini yaratıcı yazma yaklaşımı açısından değerlendirme olgusunun geliştirilmesi. *Theoretical and Applied Researches On Turkish Language Teaching* (Ed.: G. Leyla UZUN ve Umit BOZKURT). Essen: Die Blaue Eule.
- McCutchen, D., Covill, A., Hoyne, S. H. & Mildes, K. (1994). Individual differences in writing: Implications of translating fluency. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 86, 256-266.
- McMillan, J. & Schumacher, S. (2001). *Research in education a conceptual introduction*. New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Miell, D. & MacDonald, R. (2000). Children's creative collaborations: The importance of friendship when working together on a musical composition, *Social Development*, 9 (3), 348-369.
- Olgun, N. (2012). Okul öncesinde yaratıcı drama. Cagdas Drama Dernegi Trabzon Temsilciligi Konulu Atolye, Trabzon.
- Olinghouse, N. G. & Santangelo, T. (2010). Assessing the writing of struggling learners. *Focus On Exceptional Children*, 43(4), 1-27.
- Oral, G. (2003). *Yine yazı yazıyoruz*. Pegem A Yayıncılık, Ankara.
- San, I. (2002). Yaratıcı dramanın-egitsel boyutları. *Yaratıcı Drama 1985-1998 Yazılar* (2. Baskı), (Edt.: Omer ADIGUZEL). Ankara: Naturel Yayınları.
- San, I. (1995). Yaratıcılık ve eğitim, *Milliyet Sanat Dergisi*, Ankara.
- Stowe, A. (2001). Using drama to improve creative writing. Retrieved from <http://www.ntrp.org.uk/sites/all/documents/Stowe.pdf> 12 April 2012.
- Sundem, G. (2007). *Improving student writing skills*. USA: Corinne Burton,
- Ustundag, T. (2010). *Yaratıcı drama öğretmenimin günlüğü*. (9. Baskı). Ankara: PegemA Yayıncılık.
- Vural, E. T. (2010). MEB özel doğaç yaratıcı drama öğretmenliği/liderliği programı 4. aşama notları. Cagdas Drama Dernegi, Ankara.
- Yildirim, A. & Simsek, H. (2006). *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri*. Ankara: Seckin Yayıncılık.

Appendix-1: Writing Skill Evaluation Form

Dimensions	Weak (1)	Acceptable (2)	Moderate (3)	Good (4)	Very good (5)
Writing organization					
1. Paper format					
2. Correct writing of letters					
3. Correct writing of words					
4. Correct spacing between words					
5. Correct spacing between lines and between paragraphs					
6. Readable writing					
Content					
7. Using a consistent title					
8. Inclusion of main and supporting ideas					
9. Writing in accordance with the aim					
10. To-do-point writing					
11. No inclusion of inconsistent information					
12. Reasonable integration					
13. No factual mistakes					
Language and expression					
14. Clear and intelligible language					
15. Integrated sentences and paragraphs					
16. Correct use of the words					
17. Writing with correct rules of spelling					
18. Writing with correct punctuation					
19. No poor expression					
20. No repeated words and sentences					
21. Using proper expression for the aim					

Appendix 2: Writing Attitude Scale

	Completely disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Undecided (3)	Agree (4)	Completely agree (5)
1. It is interesting for me to write.					
2. I feel relaxed while writing.					
3. Writing is a boring activity.					
4. It is joyful for me to write.					
5. I have difficulty in writing.					
6. I write in my spare time.					
7. I like writing.					
8. I do not write if it is not obligatory.					
9. I feel unhappy while writing.					
10. I like participating in writing activities.					
11. I am not interested in writing.					
12. I like writing different genres.					
13. I can express myself well through writing.					
14. I am afraid of writing.					
15. Writing is useless.					
16. Good writing increases my academic achievement.					
17. I could not write well despite my attempts.					
18. Writing is joyful for me.					

Appendix 3: Sample Activity

Genre: Story

Duration: 180 minutes

Method and technique: Creative drama, improvisation, role playing, dull image

Equipment: Drawing papers, wool ropes with the size of 15–20 cm., one ball of string, crayons, A4 papers, pencils, tape, CDs, CD player

Gains

1. S/he writes a story using the pictures.

2. S/he wants to write a story.

Application

A- Preparation-warming up

1. Activity: Participants walk freely in the setting without touching other participants. Then teacher claps his hands to create a rhythm. Participants walk following the rhythm. When teacher says “stop”, they stand calmly. Rhythm is gradually increased and decreased. The teacher says the same instruction for some time. After the activity, the participants express their views (Olgun, 2012).

2. Activity: One of the volunteer participants is selected as “it”. S/he touches the others and they stand still until one of their peers touches them. Then another child is selected as “it”. But the manner of the game is modified.

3. Activity: Each participant is given a ball of string. Music plays and participants dance using the ropes. Then the music is stopped and they stand still and leave the ropes. They try to shape their body as the shape of the ropes. The same activity is repeated for a while. Then drawing papers are put on the bottom. Participants again dance. When music is stopped, they put the ropes on the papers and try to shape their body as the shape of the ropes. After three times, participants draw the shape of the ropes on the paper. Then, they draw a picture of an object based on their earlier drawings. Next, they introduce this object as they are the objects they drawn. Other participants try to know what the object is. Lastly, participants draw pictures using color pencils involving the object they have drawn before (Vural, 2010).

Mid evaluation: Participants sit in circle and put the picture in front of them. They give it to their peer sitting at the right side. Pictures are reviewed. Then participants express their feelings about the pictures they see.

B- Animation

4. Activity: The pictures are put on the wall. Teacher says that it is an art exhibition. The participants visit the exhibition and review the drawings. Teacher asks them to talk about the exhibition. Then the students are divided into groups with two. Groups go next to the drawings they choose. Then they animate pairs visiting an exhibition. They use improvisation. Then teacher asks a group to continue their animation and others to become dull image. All groups animate their roles.

5. Activity: Participants form four groups. They draw pictures and then write a story about these drawings. Teacher gives feedbacks in regard to the stories. Group members exchange ideas about the story. The groups review the stories in terms of grammar and rules of spelling. Then they form dull objects regarding the story they have written. The other groups watch these dull objects and make predictions over what these objects are. They also take notes about these dull objects. At the end the stories are read and the drawings are looked at. The predictions of the groups are evaluated. Then the stories and pictures are put on the wall (Vural, 2010).

6. Activity: Teacher asks the groups to read their notes about the dull objects animated by other groups. Groups begin to prepare improvisation about a new story. Groups are given time to develop improvisation. Then the improvisation of each group is watched. The help of other groups is discussed.

C- Evaluation-discussion

7. Activity: Participants walk freely while music plays. They form a dull image reflecting the current study. One of them acts the space in which they are. The others become an object in this space.

8. Activity: At the end of the session, the participants form a circle. One of them is given a ball of string. S/he expresses her feelings about the study. Each participant expresses his feelings after the ball of string is given. The study ends with this activity.